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# Waite Campus Childrens Centre Parent Newsletter

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*From the Director*

*June 2011*

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## Developing Healthy Sleeping Habits for Children

On Wednesday 29th June we had Dr Sarah Blunden, sleep researcher as a guest speaker at our parent evening. I believe all those who attended gained some insights into the changing sleep patterns and sleep needs of young children. While Sarah did not have any easy solutions to some of the challenges parents face with children's sleep, her knowledge of the importance of adequate sleep was supported with some strategies to help establish healthy sleep patterns. In otherwise healthy children, experts say improving sleep may be the easiest way to improve behaviour and better academic performance.

Dr. Blunden has these tips for better sleep:

"Make the effort to have set bedtimes and wake times, quiet time before bed and a daily nap for younger children to ensure they get enough sleep, it'll make a big difference. The child will do better and the family will be happier."

Many parents may also be surprised to learn that spicy or salty foods in the evening, such as pizza, can affect sleep and cause your kids to wake up in the middle of the night because they're thirsty. Experts also recommend a quiet bedroom that's not too hot or too cold and a good bedtime routine, such as reading a book to younger children or letting older kids listen to calming music with the lights out before bed.

"The most important thing is for kids to have a regular bedtime and a regular wake time, which shouldn't be more than an hour later than usual on weekends and holidays. You should also keep TV's and computers out of kids' rooms, they're a stimulant and a temptation to stay awake, and they could affect your child's sleep hormone."

For more information have a look at the following websites:

[www.sleepeducation.net.au/](http://www.sleepeducation.net.au/) and [www.unisa.edu.au/sleep/](http://www.unisa.edu.au/sleep/)

## Bookings and enrolments

If you are wanting to make any changes to your child's bookings please let us know as early as possible. Please remember that children are required to have a booking of two full days. We do have a few one day bookings for families on maternity leave or new to child care. These must be discussed and negotiated with the Director. While we do offer 1/2 day sessions, however, these are limited in each room.

Holidays will only attract a holding fee if we receive written notice at least 2 weeks in advance.

Email is a great way to do this as it can be done at any time.

## Dental Health for Children

In the past month we have had two visits from dental health nurses from the School Dental Service at Mitcham as part of the Lift the Lip program. If your child did not attend on one of these days you are still able to receive a free dental screening for your child. Please contact SA Dental Service Health Promotion Division on 82229016 who will help you with locating the closest service for you.

The best way to have healthy teeth and prevent tooth decay is:

- ◆ Give babies under 6 months only breastmilk or formula
- ◆ Do not settle your baby in bed with a bottle
- ◆ Give up bottle feeding by 12 months
- ◆ Avoid sweet, sticky foods and drinks
- ◆ Children should have their first visit to the dentist around 12 months
- ◆ Water is the best drink for children, or unflavoured milk.
- ◆ When children are old enough, encourage them to drink water to rinse their mouth after eating.

### New babes:

Congratulations to  
Niamh, Andrew and Poppy (R3)  
on the birth of George 2/5/2011  
and to  
Hasnuri, Syukran, and Adam (R3)  
on the birth of Daniel 7/6/2011

### Board and PAG Matters 2011

**Adelaide University Childcare Services Inc (AUCS) meets on the last Monday of the month.**

The Board has continued to discuss the impact of the National Quality Agenda for early childhood to ensure that our centres maintain their high quality service. In addition the Board has begun a strategic plan for 2011 - 2014 based on the seven quality areas of the National Quality Standard. The next AUCS meeting will be on Monday August 29th at North Terrace.

The PAG last met on Wednesday 22nd June. We looked at changes to our Sustainable Living policy to align with our Site Environment Management Plan. We also looked at changes to the Security of Children policy which has been in draft for a few years, to incorporate requirements of the new National Regulations and National Quality Standard. We will be doing our general policy review during July and August and will be seeking feedback from all families.

### Budgets 2011-2012

The new fees effective from Monday 4 July 2011 will be:

	Under 2's	Over 2's
Weekly	\$385	\$380
Day	\$78	\$77
Session AM	\$46	\$45
Session PM	\$45	\$44

Bonds will be updated at the end of July to reflect your current booking and fees.

### Teaching children the art of self regulation

One of the key things that supports the development of wellbeing for children is the ability to self regulate and self-soothe. Teaching children to regulate thoughts, emotions and behaviour when they are young provides them with essential skills that support physical, mental and emotional health both as they grow up and throughout life. Young children need guidance from caring and supportive adults to learn how to regulate their own behaviour and to self-soothe when they are tired or unhappy. It is frequent and positive connections between the infant and caregiver that lay the groundwork for emotional and later other forms of self-regulation.

#### What is self regulation ?

Self-regulation is a deep, internal mechanism that enables children, as well as adults to engage in mindful, intentional, and thoughtful behaviours. Emotional self-regulation and cognitive self-regulation have similar neural roots; thus, as children grow older and their brains develop, they can increasingly take control of both their thinking and their feelings. However, children need both support and practice. A neural system is like a muscle and will continue to develop when repeatedly exercised. Conversely, if children **do not** systematically engage in self-regulatory behaviours at a young age, the corresponding brain areas may not develop to their full potential.

#### How self regulation develops:

In general, self-regulation begins between 12-18 months. This is when children become more aware of social demands and develop the ability to change their behaviour when a parent asks. In most cases, this early step in self-control requires an adult to be nearby.

By 24 months, this ability improves to the point where children start to develop self-control, or the ability to follow wishes more often when mum and dad aren't around.

By 36 months, most children can internalise parents' guidance. In other words, children will act in ways that reflect how they think mum or dad would want them to in different situations.

#### Self regulation and sleeping:

Teach babies from 6 months how to self-soothe by allowing them the opportunity to learn how to do it and by making them as comfortable as they can be alone - comfort toys, dummies, nightlights can comfort them.

For toddlers and preschoolers, teach young children how to put themselves to sleep alone by having a familiar and calming bed time routine and being close by if needed; then withdraw your presence from their sleep environment slowly but surely.

# Waite Campus Childrens Centre Green Page

## Sustainable living at home with the Heinson family: composting and water saving!

Michaela and Graham, tell some of the things they are doing at home:

“We use compostable nappies for both our kids and were pleasantly surprised when Eenee started making 100% compostable nappies with washable re-usable gripper belts. They are made in Tasmania and it's easy to buy them online. We bought two Australian-designed Aerobin 400 litre composting bins before Karina our eldest was born. Once a year we bury the compost from one bin. This isn't too onerous and we've been surprised how quickly the compost breaks down. We put our kitchen scraps in with the nappies and find that the Aerobins do keep in moisture and retain heat.

Last year we put in a small rainwater tank (3300 litres) to water the veggie patch. We calculated it would fill about 5 times a year with rain from the pergola roof. We had an idea to create an overflow watercourse for the tank that would double as a water play area for the kids but hadn't come up with a solution. When we discovered how the water feature had been made in Pilyabilyangga at WCCC we set out to copy it on a smaller scale. It's still a work in progress, but when we are finished we'll have three cascading waterholes carved in sandstone blocks. Then we'll want to come up with another project idea so we can visit the sandstone quarry at Carey Gully again - that was fun! “

Do you have some tips or ideas on ways that families can save energy or improve their sustainable living practices? We would like to hear your stories of what you are doing at home.

Just email to: [childcare.waite@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:childcare.waite@adelaide.edu.au) and title it *Sustainable living at home. ....the ? family.*

## Reducing Energy costs while keeping warm:

There are many simple actions you can do around the home in winter to reduce our household energy use and carbon emissions, while still keeping toasty warm. Best of all most of these actions don't cost anything. Try some of the following:

- ◆ Use curtains, particularly thick ones, to reduce heat loss. Keeping your curtains and external blinds closed at night and on cloudy days helps to keep the cold out and the warmth in. During the day, let the natural light and sunshine stream through your windows to naturally heat your home.
- ◆ During winter close off any rooms that don't need heating, block off unused fireplaces to prevent heat escaping and seal off any draughts to keep the cold air out. Tip - stuffing an old pair of worn out stockings makes a great door snake.
- ◆ Keep your heater's thermostat set between 18-21°C in winter. Decreasing your temperature setting by just one degree can reduce your power bill for heating by up to 15 per cent.
- ◆ Use a thermometer to see how warm your rooms are – you should be comfortable in winter clothes, not in shorts and t-shirts!
- ◆ Put on some extra layers – wearing warmer clothing or putting an extra blanket on your bed keeps your power costs down and keeps you cosy too.

## Looking for something different in the school holidays?

### Try Winter in Cleland

**Biodiversity Walks** along the Cleland Conservation Park Perimeter Track

**EXPERIENCE THE DELIGHTS OF WINTER IN CLELAND...**

Take a walk along the Perimeter Track with **experienced bushwalking guides** from the Urban Biodiversity Unit.

**WHAT:** There will be **2 easy natural history walks** full of interesting Cleland titbits while pointing out local flora and fauna.

**WHEN:** Walks go from 9-10.30 and 11.00-12.30, **Tuesday 12th July 2011.**

**WHERE:** Meet in the **Cleland Wildlife Park carpark** (look for the Backyards for Wildlife banner).

**RSVP: Bookings are essential**, please phone 8278 0600 or email

[info@urbanforest.on.net](mailto:info@urbanforest.on.net)